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ABSTRACT

The deterioration of the American public education system is not related to current teacher and administrator commitment; rather, there is a philosophic confusion about what the educational system can and should do for pupils and about the role that school administrators should play within that system. The essential reform necessary today is the evolution of schools into places that stimulate learning: places where the mind is not just a catalogue and where individuals can thoughtfully find and make meaning. The relevant school principal role is one of developing the thoughtful mind. Innovative programs to prepare principals for this role include internships under mentor principal guidance and genuine cooperation between universities and school districts. One such program, the Leaders Preparation Program (LPP) implemented in 1986, began as a collaborative arrangement between five Utah shool districts and the College of Education at Brigham Young University; today, 16 Utah school districts participate, and program graduates are highly sought as administrative applicants throughout the state. Current observations of four LPP interns and four Utah Valley mentor principals, conducted by three university department members and three graduate students, raise questions that indicate promise of improvement for administrator preparation programs. (28 references) (KM)

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# Preparing School Administrators for the 21st Century: Competing Conceptual Frameworks

## IMPLICATIONS OF PREPARING SCHOOL ADMINSTRATORS: MENTORING

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## Implications of Preparing School Administrators: Mentoring

Recently, we bumped into a university colleague who is a seasoned and competent supervisor of student teachers, an educator filled with enthusiasm and good ideas about teaching. Knowing of his interest in working with young teachers, we were somewhat surprised during the brief encounter to hear him say how happy he is that he will soon retire. Said he, "I am not optimistic about the future of public education. I have devoted my life to improving it, and now that I have spent a lifetime--more than forty years in the business--I can't see that there has been much change in education at all as a result of my work."

This experience affected us deeply because two of us are about ten years away from retirement and we have begun to reflect on our careers as educators. As we look back on our years of experience we, too, can detect that public education has deteriorated somewhat, not because teachers or administrators are any less devoted to youngsters today than in past decades, or that they do less work in behalf of children, or that they sacrifice any less for students. No, we believe that quite the opposite is true. A devoted army of professional educators in the trenches works hard, even tirelessly, for children today. The problem lies with the education system and is not related to the commitment of the current teacher and administrator force of

professionals.

We believe that there is a philosophic confusion about what the educational system can and should do for pupils and about the role that school administrators should play within that system. The philosophic confusion is manifested in a number of current practices in education, only two of which we will specify at this time. The first is the proliferation of highly structured, programmatic approaches to classroom teaching and learning that give both teachers and pupils the impression that if they "follow the steps," meaningful education will automatically occur. Mindlessly following steps leads to neither good teaching or learning. Those who advocate such programs have neglected the philosophic foundations of education that underlie teaching and learning.

The second is the direct teaching of "skills. Hyde and Bizar (1989, p.7) argue that during the last two decades, educators have "conceived of reading, writing and mathematics in the elementary schools as 'basic skills'," an idea to which they are diametrically opposed. The reduction of reading, writing and mathematics "to overt behaviors that can be considered skills is itself a tragically mistaken notion." We concur.

A number of times during the development of this paper we almost succumbed to this kind of scholarly "fatal attraction." We almost believed that we could focus directly on the topic of mentoring as an answer to the question, "How should administrators be prepared for the 21st century?" However, the

more we concentrated on the how of mentoring, the firmer became our conviction that we must first address the why of it. Further, as we conducted research on mentoring, we realized that we were not comfortable advocating mentoring as a semi-magic key enabling educators to secure important learning smoothly and easily by simply adopting a mentoring program. We did not succumb; instead, we concluded that three ideas would underlie the propositions we will make in this paper:

First, widespread failure to comprehend the change process (as contrasted to a particular change or innovation) as crucial to educational reform has led to innumerable disappointments, great resentment, as well as wasted effort, time and money. In our view, school administrators must, in leading a school, understand the process of change. Second, teaching and learning are to be the central focus of education. Novel ideas about school structure, finance and law, etc., may develop as a result of considering carefully the demands of classroom teaching and learning, but the latter ideas must drive the former, not the other way around. Finally, if we are to have teaching and learning that foster, first and foremost, the development of the mind, then school principals must be thoughtfully engaged in the primary business of teaching and learning. From our perspective, the paramount responsibility of the school principal is the fostering of intellective growth of children.

Once we made these foundational ideas explicit for ourselves, we were able to focus on the appropriate features of

a preparation program for school administrators for the 21st century. One of those features, potentially one of the most important, is often called "mentoring."

Thus, this paper is written in four parts, the first three designed to be foundational to the topic "Implications of Preparing School Administrators: Mentoring." Part I focuses on the theme of the change process. The literature on the subject and our experience in schools suggest that in spite of the preponderance of what Sarason (1982) calls the "modal" process of change, good ideas simply do not get willed into being. Part II deals with our agenda for change for the 1990's and on into the 21st Century. The agenda calls for schools that encourage thoughtful teaching and learning in a decent environment, for an educational system that embodies the reforms envisioned by Ted Sizer and John Goodlad, among others. Part III is devoted to a discussion of the role of the principal and is based on the idea that if our agenda is to promote schools as thoughtful places for teaching and learning, our administrator preparation programs must develop principals who are thoughtful teachers and learners. Finally, Part IV will deal with mentoring, including an interim report of our current research on mentoring of pre-service principals.

## Part I: Of Purposes and Puppets

> When those who have power to manipulate changes act as if they have only to explain and when their explanations are not at once accepted, shrug off opposition as ignorance or prejudice, they express a profound contempt for the meaning of lives other than their own. For the reformers have already assimilated these changes to their purposes, and

> worked out a reformulation which makes sense to them. . . If they deny others the chance to do the same, they treat them as puppets dangling by the threads of their own conceptions. (Marris, 1974, p.166)

In spite of Marris' vividly-stated observation, one looks in vain for signs that innovators generally approach educational change meaningfully and personally (Berman and McLaughlin, 1978; Fullan, 1982; Sarason, 1982). Indeed, so-called change-agents typically think that they can "direct" others to change or "involve" those who "need" to be changed and that giving direction to others or involving them assures change. But we believe, based on a number of research reports, that when changes eventuate they are the result of people attaching subjective sense and meaning to a proposed change. The phrase "mandated change" is close to being an oxymoron.

People, by nature, resist any innovation that does not take into account their need to develop personal meaning. Too many leaders ignore the power of the "conserving impulse," a quality that helps people retain the meaning they have attached to patterns in their lives. (Postman, 1979; Marris, 1974) This conserving impulse is strong because meaning itself is fundamental. We believe Frankl's dictum to be accurate: "Man's search for meaning is the primary motivation in his life . . ." (Frankl, 1984, p. 121)

"Meaning" denotes a person's <u>construction</u> of an ordered and satisfying reality out of his or her perceptions. The world, after all, is comprised of people trying to make sense of their lives. We all depend on our day-to-day living, with its familiar

persons, actions, and scenes, to give meaning and purpose to our lives. "[N]othing becomes meaningful until it can be placed in a context of habits of feeling, principles of conduct, attachments, purposes, [and] conceptions of how people behave . . . " (Marris, 1974, p.10). Without consideration of the personal meaning to be attached to a proposed change by the persons affected, little significant real change will occur. Indeed, what changes do occur may be unwelcome ones.

The following illustration of the centrality of meaning in connection with change was chronicled by Marris (1974). The British redevelopment authority in Lagos, Nigeria, drew up elaborate plans to "do something" about what the managers considered as bad--and deteriorating--conditions in the Central City. The director of the slum clearance plan was an engineer who saw open sewers in the streets, inadequate housing, overcrowding, and general physical squalor as "problems of social engineering to which a solution must exist" (p. 53).

To the planners' surprise and chagrin, the local inhabitants not only failed to welcome the proposed changes with open arms but were offended by them and militant in their resistance. When the advantages that would accrue from the changes were pointed out to them, they in turn pointed to the serious disruptions that would affect their social intercourse and family life. The harder the engineers promoted their "improvements," the more determined were the citizens not to allow the foreigners to impose unwanted changes on their lives.

In this situation, the redevelopment board managers had satisfied themselves as to the usefulness of the proposed changes. To the Nigerians, however, the proposed changes were not only serious disruptions of their traditional social life but also a personal affront. The condemnation their neighborhood as a slum was a condemnation of themselves. The consequences of the clash of two antithetical meanings were mutual resentment, hostility, and defensiveness. The announced purpose of the effort, to benefit the Nigerians, was lost in the reality of conflicting personal meanings.

According to the recent history of educational change and reform efforts, many change proponents operate on a similar unthinking view of human progress as they make these statements: "We should carefully arrange the conditions of our proposed change so that everybody buys into it." Or, "All avenues of possible opposition should be considered and sealed off, so that the innovation won't be 'derailed.'" "Let's involve the teachers, so they won't feel left out." Such a mind-set on the part of educational innovators, although perhaps understandable, is untenable in light of current knowledge about change.

For reformers to construct personally-satisfying meaning for themselves relative to their innovation and then deny the same opportunity to those who will be affected by the change is both insensitive and counterproductive. Marris' image of the dangling puppets is unsettling and ought to impel us to consider seriously the way change efforts are typically undertaken.

Were the significance of personal meaning in connection with change to be accepted widely, educational change agents would concentrate less on the marketing of innovations and more on trying to understand and transform their own subjective realities in order that teachers, administrators, students, parents, and the community clearly understand them. We believe that the purpose of proposed change, derived from the meaning acquired by the innovators, is more important than the content of the change. The primary issue for educational innovators is, properly, not the "goodness" of the proposed innovation but the purposes to be served by it.

Part II: The Centrality of Teaching and Learning in Schools

Whereas the 1980's may be considered the decade of educational reform rhetoric, perhaps one can hope that the decades of the 90's and into the 21st Century will witness less rhetoric and more substantive change. The essential reform should be the evolution of schools into places that stimulate learning, places where, in the words of Richard Mitchell, ". . . the mind takes the grasp of itself," where the mind is not simply a catalogue, a register only, but rather it can withdraw ". . . far enough so that it can, and will, consider, reflect, compare, weigh, and judge--comment, as it were, on the items in its register" (Mitchell, 1985). For "it is the great prerogative of Mankind," according to the early scientist Robert Hooke, "above other Creatures, that we are not only able to behold the works of Nature, or . . . sustein [sic] our lives by them but we have also

the power of considering [and] comparing them . . ." (Hooke, 1665, preface). In short, we think that the principal work that should go on in schools is considering, weighing, judging, and pondering. Generally speaking, schools of today are far short of that mark (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 1981).

The teaching and learning we envision would be like that esteemed by William Cory, one of Eton's masters. To his pupils Cory said, "You are not engaged so much in acquiring knowledge as in making mental efforts under criticism . . . " (Cory, 1988, p. 10) That's what we think should be happening in classrooms--students engaging in effortful cognition (Resnick, 1987) under humane criticism.

The schools we envision have purposes like those described by Ted Sizer, who argues that schools are established principally for the development of the intellect in a decent environment. He notes that no other institution in the culture "is solely devoted to developing mental powers" and that such intellectual training is practical and "opens means to educate oneself in any sphere of interest or importance." He notes further, that without the power to educate oneself, one is crippled. "With it, one can gain, on one's own, that comprehensive learning which so attracted our predecessors." (Sizer, 1984, pp. 84-85).

Nyberg and Egan (1981) also envision schools that emphasize education over the present concern for socialization. Socialization refers to preparation for a ". . . life of gainful

employment . . . . " and is designed to help people participate in everyday social, economic and political activities, in what the authors call "active citizenship." On the other hand, education refers to the development of those capacities necessary to appreciate and "enjoy those aspects of one's culture that include a historical perspective and the life of the mind."

> We believe that schools ought to provide opportunities for both socialization and education, but we also believe that schools ought to distinguish more explicitly between these functions and take more care to protect against the erosion of education. We argue that schools are becoming places where the young are socialized but no longer educated, and that the traditional assumption that schools are also responsible for education is being eroded (Nyberg and Egan, p. ix).

They argue that it is time to "push education back into our classrooms," and encourage other institutions to handle many of the socialization concerns "that have come to replace education" (Nyberg and Egan, p.16).

Education should free the mind from a prison of thoughtlessness, of unexamined assumptions, of "knee-jerk" responses or, worse, of failure to raise the significant questions man has always framed--questions about society, the good life, and moral behavior. That kind of freedom can only be achieved through the reasoned use of intellect, as noted by King and Brownell:

> Disciplined thinking makes one free--free from the minds of others, free from irrelevancies, free to become a person. Freedom is a spiritual affair and an intellectual task for every person. Without the development of intellect, man cannot be free (King and Brownell, 1966, p. 21).

As we approach the 21st century, the spirit of the majority

of public schools, is not, in our view, conducive to thoughtfulness. According to Powell, Farrar and Cohen (1985) a spirit of anti-intellectualism is unwittingly entrenched in American high schools, a spirit that reinforces a similar mindset in society at large, rather than challenging it. They argue that schools do not see themselves as a countervailing force against this mindset. Instead, the accomplishment of schools is that they have sold the public (and students) on the importance of school attendance "but have failed in the attempt to sell to most students the value of working hard to learn to use one's mind" (Powell, Farrar, & Cohen, p.311).

No doubt there are some who will warn that our argument is elitist, anti-vocational, perhaps even anti-social. Such opposition reflects the strange warping of values afflicting our schools. Although education may legitimately be asked to do other things, it must, first, enable individuals to thoughtfully find and make meaning. If education does not do that, what else can it do of value? As Mitchell remarks, "It may be, of course, that a good 'education' ought to provide something more [than understanding how meaning is found and made], but it is preposterous, perhaps even wicked to suggest that it can be had with anything less" (Mitchell, 1985, p. 10). Although known as a practical educational administrator, Henry Gradillas, the architect of the marvellous change that took place at Garfield High School in East Los Angeles (who is, incidentally, a graduate of BYU's Department of Educational Leadership), is a believer in

the notion that schools can and should stand first and foremost for the development of the intellect, no matter what countervailing forces--poverty, drug abuse, low self-esteem--exist. Nothing should be allowed to stand in the way of thoughtful teaching and learning.

With an understanding of the change process and with a reform agenda in hand which argues that schools should be thoughtful, mind-developing places, we can now discuss two crucial matters: First, the centrality of the role of school principals in fostering thoughtfulness in schools and second, the best way to prepare school leaders who will take the schools into the new century.

Part III-The Principalship: Fostering thoughtful teaching and learning in schools.

School principals have continually faced the difficult and sometimes unenviable task of role definition as their role has changed from time to time throughout the past century. The first principals were principal teachers whose responsibilities centered on teaching, not on the administrative tasks required when schools grew to have more than one teacher and one classroom. As schools grew, the principalship became associated more with administration management and less on teaching and learning. Six stages of role interpretation between the latter part of the nineteenth century and the present have been identified by Cooper and Boyd (1987, pp. 3-27): 1. Philosopher-educators (1865-1900), 2. Educator-capitalists (1900-1912), 3.

Business managers (1913-1915), 4. School executives (1915-1929), 5. Social change agents (1930-1950), and 6. Behavioral scientists (1950-present). Obviously, the principal-teacher role quickly lost its importance as other roles emerged.

The perceived role of the principalship over the past century has changed, in part, because of the increased complexity of the modern world. Confusion over the role of the principal reflects confusion over education in that complex world. For example, as teacher associations became larger and stronger, principals were automatically cast on the side of management and became alienated from teaching because of negotiated settlements. Lawsuits brought by teachers, students and parents have brought the courts into the schools, and principals have been forced to defend themselves and the schools, assuming the position of legal counsel, witness, defendant and appellant. As dollars became stretched and budgets more difficult to balance, principals became lobbyists, fund raisers and even hucksters. As schools were asked to shoulder responsibility for increasing teen pregnancies, highway deaths and drug addiction, principals became social workers, psychologists and police officers.

Heated debates about school governance only increase the confusion about the role of the principal. Should the role feature "applied science" or reflective practice"? Should the role emphasize business efficiency or creative management? Is school leadership an "art" or a "craft"? (Blumberg, 1989). In the 1980's the debate narrowed to focus on whether the principal

should be a school resource manager or an instructional leader, as if the two categories are mutually exclusive, leaving the lingering assumption that instructional leadership is the all-encompassing solution to the problem. These debates have seemed important to many in the profession but, in our view, have served only to sap our energies and distract our attention from focusing on the real question: Is the school administrator fostering, in his or her school, thoughtful teaching and learning?

The principal who does, indeed, create a school climate where teaching and learning are the focus is more than an instructional leader as defined in most of the current literature. Different standards of measurement must be employed than those advocated for the so-called "effective" schools or "efficient" schools, which are measured primarily by student achievement on standardized tests. An exemplary effective school today, under the guidance of an instructional leader, may graduate a host of high test scorers who may or may not be thoughtful people. Such graduates may, in fact, be fit only for further "education" of the type in which they have already succeeded, not prepared to challenge and resolve the complex problems facing society.

The modal approach to school effectiveness measurement grows from society's unflagging belief in the virtue of a rational-technical (Donald Schon's term) or scientific management perspective on schools, (See Wirth, 1983, chapter VI, for a

number of corroborating views). Higher scores on college entrance exams, greater numbers of required credits in certain critical subjects, greater reliance on technology, and increasing emphasis on teacher knowledge of subject matter may all be subjected to pre- and post-tests, given statistically measurable "treatments" in the form of new programs, policies and procedures, and produce quantifiable and replicable results. However, how can the presence or absence of thoughtful teaching and learning be measured? There is no warrant that effectiveness, much less efficiency, will lead to thoughtfulness.

To us, the relevant role for school principals is that of developer of the thoughtful mind. The principal who not only fosters thoughtful teaching and learning, but models this type of education, will be the leader of teachers and students who are prepared for the 21st century.

Part IV: Implications for Preparing School Administrators for the 21st Century.

With these perspectives in mind--that the nature of the change process must be understood and honored before substantive reform in schools will take place; that thoughtful teaching and learning is central to the purpose of schools; and that the school principal must be the central character in fostering thoughtful teaching and learning--we can now address the best ways to prepare principals for their role.

We begin by comparing an innovative school leaders' preparation program, which was featured in a recent issue of Principal (1987), with the traditional model of administration

preparation. Cooper and Boyd (1987) have analyzed the typical model of administrator preparation: 1) government-controlled--usually state authorities set certification requirements, oversee the training process, and actually hold the licenses of the candidates for administrative posts, 2) university-based-- the preparation of administrators for schools occurs almost totally within the classrooms of colleges and universities, 3) lock-step--the system is premised on a sequential set of approved prior experiences, including a certain number of <u>years</u> of preparation, 4) credit-driven--prospective administrators must amass a predetermined number of credits in order to receive state certification, 5) recertification-based--some form of recertification requirement mandates the periodic "updateing" of administrative licenses, 6) management-based curriculum--preparation courses are based almost entirely on the notion that there is a standard, agreed-upon philosophy of preparation, a philosophy characterized by the "management sciences."

The traditional model is so highly structured and so entrenched that few attempts have been made to break from the mold. Even field experiences have generally been arranged on a credit hour basis where so many hours spent in a school yield so many university credits. Little attention has been paid to the quality of the practicum experience. Recent studies by such educators as Goodlad and Sizer suggest breaking from tradition to provide innovative experiences for pre-service administrators and creatively arrange field experiences to take advantage of

innovations presently being suggested in thought-provoking literature. Such innovations include internships under the guidance of mentor administrators and even genuine cooperation between university schools of education and school districts.

One such innovative program is the Leaders Preparation Program (LPP) developed under the direction of the BYU/Public School Partnership, now in its third year. The Partnership is a collaborative arrangment between five Utah school districts and the College of Education at BYU. The Partnership Board of Governors is comprised of the superindendents of the five cooperating districts and the dean of the College of Education. John Goodlad, who inspired its creation, serves as consultant. Because of their deep interest in the preparation of school principals, the Board of Governors established a task force consisting of selected school principals and university faculty members to develop a program, the LPP, which has the following clearly-defined features:

1. The program capitalizes on the resources, human and material, of the university and the school districts to their mutual benefit.
2. It provides for the deliberate identification and selection of intern administrators through the cooperative efforts of superintendents, mentor principals, and university faculty members.
3. It extends to each selected intern administrator a full year leave of absence and provides significant financial

incentives.

4. It incorporates a modular curriculum emphasizing competencies, skills and knowledge essential for the beginning administrator..

5. It has an innovative instructional design calling on the resources of both the district leaders and university faculty to blend theory and application into a comprehensive, integrated experience for interns.

6. It requires full-time internship experiences for an academic year under the supervision of mentor principals who are directly involved in all aspects of the program.

The LPP was implemented in the summer of 1986 with fifteen interns selected through a series of assessment seminars. The highly competitive nature of the program has meant the refining of selection criteria and processes each year. The selection of 18 interns for the fourth group, which will begin in June 1989, was recently completed. Sixteen of Utah's 40 school districts now participate in the LPP, and graduates of the program are highly sought as applicants for administrative positions throughtout the state.

The LPP schedule begins with several orientation meetings in June to prepare interns for full-time participation in the program. Prior to summer term, they are to have completed an extensive list of background readings. During summer term, interns are in all-day course work taught by university faculty and guest lecturers from the schools.

After the completion of the summer term on campus, the students are assigned as interns to work full-time with three different mentor principals during the school year in 13-week periods. During the internships, the interns meet one day each week on campus with university faculty for discussion of their school experiences and are given opportunity to engage in reflection related to observed in-field practice. The summer courses and school-year seminars satisfy the university residency requirements and meet state certification standards. Beginning in the summer and continuing through the weekly meetings, a strong bond of collegiality develops among the intern cohort group. At the completion of the program the following June, a network of new administrators, mentor principals, and university faculty has been forged.

The unique aspects of the program have attracted interest throughout the nation as evidenced by its being selected to receive the LEAD grant for the state of Utah and grants from the Danforth Foundation. In 1988 the LPP was honored by the AASA as the Exemplary Principal Training Program Based at a University. Because the program has attracted national attention and because it is especially convenient for study, we are in the process of looking at the mentor/protege feature within a funded research effort.

Mentoring

Given the title of our presentation, perhaps the central question to which readers would like a relatively unambiguous

answer is, "How significant to an administrator training program is the concept of mentoring?" Unfortunately, that is precisely the question for which we do not have a conclusive answer. In fact, we believe that question should be only raised after several others are propounded. Our response, at any rate, is a cautionary one: Beware the claims for mentoring! We suggest a thoughtful consideration of the phenomenon, searching first for the right questions, rather than the right answers.

Although we began, as have so many others, with the attempt to define "mentoring," we soon realized that no universally acceptable definition exists. Therefore, our conception of mentoring became less focused on how to define the term and more focused on precisely what happens in that educational setting referred to as "mentoring." One result of such focusing was the increasingly clear idea that mentoring must be seen first as simply a form--one of many possible forms--of teaching and learning; it is a method of instruction. Although such an understanding may seem obvious, even trivial, casting the activity in this way helps avoid some misconceptions.

For example, if one considers mentoring to be a powerful and self-sufficient way to change behavior, transcending, as it were, ordinary teaching and learning, one will accept some of the more immoderate claims about its efficacy. The literature in the business field is replete with news that in XYZ Corportation "every" senior vice-president was found to have had a mentor somewhere in his or her climb to the near-top of corporate

leadership (Collin & Scott, 1978; Roche, 1979). If everyone who succeeds has a mentor, then every superior-subordinate relationshiip will be, of course, labeled "mentoring." Such claims carry the implication, "get a mentor, get ahead"--as if such criteria as the adequacy of the teaching and learning done in the name of mentoring and the direction of the teaching and learning were immaterial. The danger, in other words, is conceiving of mentoring as a way finally to get something for nothing.

Part of the problem lies with observers' inability to assign specific, unique functions to the activity of mentoring. Most of the literature begins with a recounting of the mythical first mentoring relationship as if the nearly father-son, twenty year relationship between Mentor and Telemachus can be duplicated in today's corporation or school. In the 1960's and 1970's, business and industry touted mentoring as the indispensable helping hand by which one must be pulled up the corporate ladder and in the 1980's education adopted the term.

In 1988 a review of the literature from 1980 to 1988 about mentoring in education yielded nearly 30 books and articles. Thirty definitions of mentoring were gleaned from this review, and nearly as many synonyms for "mentor" and "protege." At least nineteen terms, each one itself denoting complex teaching and learning activities, have been used to describe the functions of mentoring. If "mentoring" includes advising, communicating, supervising and teaching of a protege, mentee, or novice by a

mentor, coach, or role model, no wonder confusion exists when mentoring is incorporated into administrative preparation programs without thoughtful consideration for its outcome. Research into business settings has already verified that when some mentees claim they had a mentor, the mentor, when asked to corraborate the mentees' claims, did not realize such a relationship existed. Similarly, some mentors' claims of having been influential in the success of those who were once their subordinates are disputed by those who state boldly that they achieved their positions with no help from anyone (Zey, 1984; McCall et al., 1988). Therefore, "mentoring" in the field of education administration runs the risk of being everything and nothing when a part of school principal preparation programs.

Merriam (1983), critically reviewing the literature on mentoring, makes a useful suggestion for educators to note and researchers to incorporate: Observing that "mentoring begs for clarification," she writes, "better means of assessing its importance need to be developed" (p. 171). She maintains that research could productively focus on the dynamics of the mentor/protege relationship, the outcomes of the phenomenon, and the reciprocity of the relationship between mentor and protege. She concludes, "To continue surveying the extent of mentoring without clarification as to what is being surveyed seems futile" (P. 171).

Report of Research

Merriam's suggestions provide background for our research

about the mentoring element of the Leaders Preparation Program. Our team is looking at precisely the elements she recommends: the dynamics of the relationship, the motivation behind the activity, the outcomes of the phenomenon, and the nature of the reciprocity between mentor and intern. Our research, currently in its first phase and funded by a Danforth Foundation grant, is a naturalistic inquiry involving six researchers. Three members from two university departments and three graduate students are observing four LPP interns and four mentor principals who are considered to be superb principals serving in elementary and secondary schools in Utah valley.

What have we learned so far? After some 130 hours of observation (admittedly not enough time to be conclusive about our findings), we have framed the following questions which we consider to be essential to a thoughtful consideration of mentoring as a training mode for school administrators. Because, as Suzanne Langer and Margaret Mead have observed, the way a question is asked determines the limits of the answer to it--right or wrong--any improvement in our questions about mentoring gives promise, ultimately, of improvement for our administrator preparation programs. The questions incorporate Merriam's recommendations for future research:

1. For what purpose do we sponsor or conduct mentoring?
2. What motivation can be discerned for each party to the mentoring agreement?
3. How is what is happening under the aegis of mentoring

different from other teaching/learning settings?

4. What elements, exactly, constitute mentoring? That is, what is the configuration of people and intentions that characterize mentoring--and not some other form of teaching/learning?

5. What standards for assessing the value of mentoring should be applied? How are those standards to be ascertained?

To conclude our presentation, we will elaborate on the five questions, justifying the framing of them and hinting at their terrific complexity.

1. <u>For what purpose do we sponsor or conduct mentoring</u>? We have moved away from a concern about definition to a concern about the purposes for which mentoring was established as a key element of the LPP. Unless we are intending to prepare leaders who can--and will--foster thoughtful teaching and learning, how polished we are in their preparation does not matter.

For at least two decades, school administrator preparation programs have focused on the wrong vision of what schools should be. As Arthur Wirth notes, in a trenchant review of education (1983), since the 1960's many significant American educators have adopted, grimly and perseveringly, a view of educational development that may be labeled scientific-management, mechanistic, systems-centered, hyper-rational (Arthur Wise's term) or rational-technical (Donald Schon's term). Whatever the label, efficiency and measurability dominate policy

considerations. As a consequence, the thoughtful concerns and achievements of good practitioners have been downgraded in favor of ritualized, potentially mindless processes that are the province of the administrators, making them puppets of a bureaucratic institutional structure. Because thoughtful teaching and learning are what matters, we are led back to the important questions: How can mentoring contribute to the preparation of administrators who will value thoughtful teaching and learning? Can a mentor provide a useful learning experience for all the skills desired by a protege/intern?

2. What motivation can be discerned for each party to the mentoring agreement? Why does a school principal engage in the activity of "mentoring"? Why does an intern do the same? Why do school district administrators desire to become part of an organization that promotes mentoring? Assuming a caring relationship is desirable, is such a relationship possible if it is assigned or mandated? A further question asks how one can identify and select potential, competent "mentors" from the ranks of current educators?

At this point, we simply do not know precisely what to look for in the way of motivation, but we have a sense that whatever is found will be of signal importance, especially in the sense of our concern about the centrality of personal meaning for any change to be valued and, hence, implemented.

3. What is different about the teaching and learning taking place under the aegis of mentoring as compared to that in other

settings? In terms of measurable, quantifiable data, we have to admit that not many differences have been observed. The interactions, events, and activities that we are cataloging in the observed schools can be seen as replications of typical, normal educational operations. For example, an intern is given an assignment, goes to accomplish it, and comes back to report. Nevertheless, our sense is that the mentoring relationship is providing a framework for bridging the coursework/real world gap. The interns are having contact with a field-based referent for educational terms and theories that, without the contact, remain only vaguely understood verbalizations but which, with real-world immersion, take on personal, subjective meaning. Hence, the common reports that the mentoring experience is "wonderful and enlightening," may be attributable to the experiences learners have, rather than to formal verbal feedback from a mentor. This view accords with a somewhat unexpected statement in McCall et al. (1988): "Mentoring, in the sense of long-term apprentice-teacher relationships, was rare or nonexistent among . . . senior executives . . . [T]hey gained insight into themselves and their strengths and weaknesses . . . not typically from counseling sessions, [but] . . . from their mistakes, confrontations with problem subordinates, traumatic events, and career setbacks" (pp. 12-13). Can mentors be prepared to ensure that interns have immeasurable but worthwhile experiences? How can the practicum be structured to enable interns to personalize educational administration concepts and theories?

4. What elements, exactly, constitute mentoring? That is, what is the configuration of people and intentions that characterize mentoring--and not some other form of teaching/learning? This is, of course, the definition question, the one we were not going to answer, according to our earlier declaration. Once conceptualized as a form of teaching and learning, mentoring's actual distinguishing characteristics are likely to be few. At this point we note three: The one-on-one feature, mentor-intern quality; the intensity of the mentoring relationship, and the experiential base for the relationship. We hope a useful definition will become apparent when the research is completed.

5. What standards for assessing the value of mentoring should be applied? How are those standards to be ascertained? The question of assessment is exceedingly complex, and we are just beginning to address it. For example, the phrase "value of mentoring" in the question can refer to two distinct concerns. First, it can refer to the process of mentoring: "How good is the way we're doing mentoring--the length of the assignment, the particular location, the reporting processes, and so on?" Second, it can refer to the outcome of the mentoring process: "How much was learned from the process?" This latter question recognizes that it is possible to have both productive mentoring and unproductive mentoring. In other words, waving the mentoring wand does not produce, ex nihilo, useful learning. Yet, the bulk of the literature simply notes the presence of "mentoring,"

seldom considering the phenomenon; practically never assembling criteria for evaluating it in either the process or the outcome sense.

Summary

We have argued that the preparation of public school administrators cannot be approached intelligently unless three fundamental ideas are accepted: First, the adoption and implementation of change are contingent upon the creation--by all parties--of personal meaning with respect to the particular innovation being fostered.

Second, teaching and learning--the classroom or "firing line" view of administration--is the raison d'etre for educational administration. However, not just any kind of teaching and learning, but thoughtful teaching and learning in which the exaltation of skills, techniques and programs is viewed with caution and in which curriculum and learning that call for mindful consideration by the learner are championed. Unfortunately, it is usual for other conceptions to be given primacy, e.g., organizational processes, goal-setting, decision-making skills, etc.

Finally, we noted that the administrators who are to save schools in the next century are to be, themselves, thoughtful educators who have been exposed to something more than an inadequate, restricted view of "management science"--a perspective that has produced an unhealthy dependence on routines, algorithms, and pre-packaged programs. Greenfield

(1989), Schon (1989), and Hyde and Bizar (1989), have inveighed against this modal view.

Additionally, we have considered mentoring as part of the mix of requirements for the productive preparation of thoughtful school administrators. Since mentoring is a means likely to be employed toward that end (it is already heavily recommended, if not compellingly justified), we urge caution in its use. Having critically reviewed the literature and having researched teaching and learning settings designated as "mentoring," we have raised questions about the possible misuse of this instructional setting.

In that connection we asked five questions, the answers to which we believe will lead to a clearer conception of mentoring and, hence, to a more intelligent use of the method: Why do mentoring? What part does motivation play in the phenomenon? How do the activities of mentoring differ from other teaching-learning settings? What, precisely, defines mentoring? How can mentoring be intelligently assessed? These questions on mentoring are subsidiary, but related, to the main question: How can we most productively prepare school administrators for the 21st century?

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